DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 258 289 CS 504 935

AUTHOR Meiswinkel, Lauren B.
TITLE On Developing a Climate Conducive for Trust Building: Ethics Realization Teaching and the Small Group Process--Enabling Ethical Leadership Development.
PUB DATE 84
NOTE 17p.; Paper presented at the Meeting of the Speech Communication Association of Puerto Rico (San Juan, Puerto Rico, November 30-December 1, 1984).
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Classroom Environment; Conflict Resolution; Credibility; Discussion (Teaching Technique); *Ethics; Higher Education; *Leadership Qualities; *Leadership Training; *Listening Skills; Models; Role Playing; Small Group Instruction; *Speech Communication; Student Attitudes; Teaching Methods; *Values Clarification
IDENTIFIERS Dewey Meiswinkel Discussion Schema

ABSTRACT

Students in an ethics class may have their beliefs, attitudes, and values clarified if they have an opportunity to experience leadership through a particular process called the Dewey/Meiswinkel schema. The link between trusting behavior and ethics teaching that must be shown is the relationship between one's understanding of trust as a concept and one's experience of trusting behavior through a variety of classroom experiences. For example, students can be members of a semester-long support group in which they will experience leadership, observe and support other designated leaders, and role play. To create a climate conducive for trust and ethical leadership development, each student should understand what is meant by leadership. Self-disclosure may help others understand one's potential leadership. Each student must be aware of at least three core listening behaviors and practice these every time the group is in session. In addition, each student, especially the leader, must understand how to manage conflict between task, maintenance, and even blocking roles. Finally, the structure of the ethics teaching experience must provide the models for teaching or achieving these conditions. Appendixes include the Dewey/Meiswinkel discussion schema, a values grid, and the Theory E leadership development model. (HOD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED258289

Lauren B. Meiswinkel

On Developing a Climate Conducive For Trust Building: Ethics Realization Teaching and the Small Group Process-- Enabling Ethical Leadership Development

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

Abstract

The small group offers an interesting focus for the study of beliefs, attitudes, leadership and values formulation. Since the group is one of the primary communication experiences for most students, we would expect the Speech Communication literature to reflect the value of leadership development in the small group process. And it does; however, this paper purports to show that when participating in a group the student may have his values and leadership clarified if he has the opportunity to experience leadership through the Dewey/Meiswinkel schema. Given certain conditions, the potential exists for developing a climate conducive to values teaching and trust building as well as mutual respect or validation from each member.

CS 504 935

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Lauren B. Meiswinkel

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CHAPTER III

Meeting in a small group is a necessary fact of life. Most of us value some sort of primary or reference group. But do we really value or trust the leadership behavior of others as well as we trust our own capacity to lead?

A partial answer to this question may be found as we structure and clarify a working model for teaching trusting behavior and ethical leadership development through the small group process. For example, Halbert E. Gulley and Dale G. Leathers state that, "trusting behavior has a major impact on interpersonal relationships in the small group."[1] Trusting is, in part, the willingness of individuals to be open or self-disclosing which becomes an integral part of the climate conducive for ethical leadership development. Gully and Leathers further clarify interpersonal trust as:

> that relationship that exists when the interactants base their behavior on the expectation and prediction that each will act in mutually beneficial ways as they strive to achieve objectives that involve some degree of risk[2]

While trusting behavior and ethical leadership development will be given operational clarification later in this chapter, it is significant to note that trust building is inherently the most critical part of the leadership function. One's personal growth or sense of worth in the small group is directly affected by, for example, the leader's/teacher's attitude, credibility, or ability to create a "trusting" climate.

So, a key aspect of the ethics teaching process may be found in the discussion structure given by me for rational reflection on ethical problems. (The Dewey/Meiswinkel schema is cited in this chapter as a method or model for doing ethical leadership development teaching.) But what is meant by the term ethical leadership or values teaching? Much of the literature concerning values clarification comes from the education theorists Sidney Simon, Howard Kirschenbaum, Louis Raths and others.[3] While this writer borrows some of the idea of values teaching, the application to speech communication is relatively new. (Also see Values Grid as a model cited later in this chapter.)

For example, the Center for Humanistic Education or Values Realization at Amherst, Massachusetts is only one of numerous agencies that seeks to clarify how values teaching is related to such fields as English, History, Science, Math, and even Afro-American History. In the study of ethics teaching, however, the field of Speech is also very much concerned with value formulation. As a matter of fact, in a personal conversation with Sidney Simon (May 1981) I was told that values teaching and speech are very open to scholarly exploration and publication. Essentially, values or ethics teaching seeks to create a classroom climate wherein students value learning because it enhances their personal worth, growth, and understanding of self in relationship to those in their peer group, especially the leader. For example, in a past discussion course taught (Speech 216) and an Ethics course being taught by me (Philosophy 180), a five page paper is required of my students in order to help them understand leadership

behavior and/or ethical theory. The paper is designed to help the student focus on his/her personal growth through classroom discussion experiences - especially those wherein the student assumed, emerged, or was designated a leader of a task group. In addition, the ethical leadership development approach seeks to instill in the student a sense of pride in self and mutual respect or validation of the other person, thus enhancing one's own worth and leadership potential.

The new link between trusting behavior and ethics teaching that must be shown is the relationship between one's understanding of trust as a concept and one's experience of trusting behavior through a variety of classroom experiences. For example, each student will be a member of a semester long "support group." In this group he/she will at least:

a. experience leadership.

b. observe and support other designated leaders.

c. role play - exhibit task, maintenance, or even blocking behavior.

Furthermore, through selected values clarification strategies each member should be better able to value the other person. Several strategies that may enhance cohesion and trust are:

1. the five square nonverbal experience wherein each person must cooperate in order to form five equal squares - the face becomes an important communicator of one's nonverbal action.

2. practice brainstorming as a means of getting all ideas from each member thus enhancing worth of idea contribution.

Numerous other strategies have been utilized by this writer. Many are listed in the Simon and Kirschenbaum source cited earlier.

As mentioned in the abstract, the student may have his/her beliefs, attitudes, and values clarified if he/she has an opportunity to experience leadership through a particular process called the Dewey/Meiswinkel schema. Given a sense of worth and identity in the group, as a leader designate or a leader potential, it is imperative for us to define what special role leadership plays in helping the individual trust the other person through small group tasks. Leadership has been defined, broadly, by a variety of writers as that capacity to influence others.[4] However, <u>influence</u>, in an ethics teaching setting, is clarified as that leadership behavior wherein each member supports or cooperates in such a way as to enable the designated leader to be a leader. The premise of this leadership development experience is based on the fact that not all have identical leadership traits or abilities - since much prior orientation in life as well as personality variables may affect one's capacity to lead. But, the thesis of the chapter may be enhanced if each person has the opportunity to experience leadership influence in a positive atmosphere of group, classroom, and most importantly non-critical teacher support.

So, given the opportunity to lead, then each potential leader should do a self analysis of his/her leadership ability. An interesting and helpful profile is called the "Leadership

Communication Behavior Test."[5] The "test" should provide each member with a clearer idea as to the leadership communication behaviors that make up a desirable communication style. But, to reinforce an earlier statement - ethics teaching states that you become a leader when you are supported, understood, and validated by others in the group, if you are to have influence to lead. The test is but a personal indicator to the student what may be more meaningfully clarified through the support group experience.

So, if the leader is the key person in creating a climate conducive for trust and ethical leadership development or personal growth, then we might ask - what are some factors that may enable the leader or facilitator[6] to be this key person? If we remember the premise of the chapter - each person must assume a leadership role, what, then are the criteria or factors that help create the climate conducive for trusting behavior and ethics teaching in the small group processes?

The following six standards are set forth as a working model or framework in which ethics teaching and trust building may be realized:

1. Each person should understand what is meant by leadership.
    a. the student will write a five-page paper defining leadership from a variety of sources.
    b. the student will analyze his/her own leadership.
2. Each person should understand what is meant by Theory Y Leadership. (a precursor to Theory E)

a. a reading of Theory Y Leadership or a suitable article which propounds the McGregor thesis will be given to each student. (Also review Ouchi's Theory Z.)

b. a role in a human relations or Values Clarification experience may be provided as an alternate assignment.

So, at the outset of class, as well as throughout the semester, the student needs to understand the impact of the human side of leadership. Relating to human needs in the small group may best create the setting for clarifying one's values and trust behavior. Self-disclosure may help others understand one's potential leadership. Theory Y is but one method of helping group members be open. Theories Z and E are newer methods.

A third standard focuses on empathic listening:

3. Each member must be aware of at least three core listening behaviors and practice these every time the group is in session:

    a. paraphrasing the verbal as well as perception checking the nonverbal.

    b. giving credit to ideas expressed by all members - no put downs of the person, but

    c. showing concern for the idea expressed by looking at both sides of the idea - if the point of view clashes with one's own idea.

Core listening behaviors greatly enhance the ability of the leader and group members to show concern and worth of another person's beliefs, attitudes, and values. If people listen, we tend to trust their behavior.[8] Empathic listening gives undivided attention to the other person's comments.

4. Each member, especially the leader, must understand how to manage conflict between task, maintenance, and even blocking roles. In order to lessen conflict:

a. the pro/con analysis may clarify and objectify the conflict.

b. meetings of the group leader with the instructor may help clarify or lessen potential conflict.

A group that stays together all semester must risk some conflict. Yet conflict is not bad.[9] Those groups that have experienced trust behavior - at least listening behavior - are best able to lessen the potential conflict if and when it comes.

Some degree of risk or conflict is inherent in most task oriented groups when role behavior is understood by the members.

5. Another model for enhancing trust or developing a climate conducive to building trust is the retreat experience.

   a. each group may participate in an overnight experience designed to develop community.

   b. each group - or individual member may experience a longer session such as a weeklong retreat designed to further develop one's values.

6. Finally, as stated in the abstract, the structure of the ethics teaching experience must provide the models for teaching or for achieving the previous standards set forth:

   a. the Dewey/Meiswinkel schema not only should help each member manage or lead a group but also enable the leader to deal with controversial topics in an objective way.

   b. In addition to the process for discussion of controversial topics, the schema further develops strategies for implementation which is the central part of the problem solving or persuasive process.

   c. the schema further provides options for reality testing of the groups proposition of policy or discussion question by:

1. interviewing key leaders
2. polling persons
3. doing current semester research
4. personal experience with the topic

The key emphasis in the small group ethics teaching and leadership development process is for each member to experience leadership. Ethical leadership development takes more time than one course. Yet with one's values and personal worth at stake, as well as the opportunity for leadership development, every effort should be made to enable all students to participate in the ethics teaching process as set forth in the previous six standards or models. Validation of one's potential leadership may be the most important part of ethics teaching and trust building in the small group process.

Essentially, then, ethical leadership development and clarification of one's current values may best be experienced as the student tests a "strategy" by doing the strategy in real life... You are not what you think you are but what you think and do - you are.

ENDNOTES

1. Halbert E. Gulley and Dale G. Leathers, Communication and Group Processes - Techniques for Improving the Quality of Small Group Communication, third edition (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1977), pp. 212-215.

2. Ibid., p. 213.

3. See Sidney B. Simon, Leland Howe and Howard Kirschenbaum, Values Clarification: A Handbook of Practical Strategies (New York: Hart Publishing Co., 1972). Also see Kirschenbaum and Simon (editors), Readings in Values Clarification (Columbus, Ohio: Charles Merrill, 1977). This writer experienced a Simon workshop at Towson State University, August 1980. Most experiences for improving trust relationships were conducted through the small group process. Essentially, values clarification or values realization is the effort on the part of interactants to establish a warm, empathic relationship - hence validation of the significant other is imperative. Put downs or negative criticism have no place in values teaching or small group work.

4. An excellent section on "Leadership in Groups" is found in Stanley E. Jones, Dean C. Barnlund, and Franklin S. Haiman, The Dynamics of Discussion (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1980), p. 197-240. See especially p. 198 where the authors define leadership as "influential action" or any action which exerts a significant influence on group behavior. Also see Albert C. Kowitz and Thomas J. Knutson's Decision Making in Small Groups (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1980). Particularly important for this paper is their thesis that "everyone in the group should have a chance to exercise leadership at some point in the group deliberations," p. 88. Everyone should experience the power to influence action.

5. See Halbert E. Gulley and Dale G. Leathers Communication and Group Processes, p. 273-276. The thesis of the Gulley and Leathers book is that quality of leadership communication behavior should maximize the quality of the communication of group members (p. 279).

6. Carl Rogers, Freedom to Learn (Columbus, Ohio: Charles Merrill, 1969).

7. See Edgar H. Schein In Defense of Theory Y. Schein's paper is based on a presentation made at the Western Electric Conference, Chicago, Illinois, November 11, 1974. Reprinted from Organizational Dynamics, Vol. 4, No. 1, Summer 1975.

8. The concept of validation is essential to trust building in the small group. The term may have originated in Virginia Satir's earlier work Conjoint Family Therapy, rev. ed., (Palo Alto, California: Science Behavior Books, 1967.)

9. See Kowitz and Knutson Decision Making in Small Groups. Management of conflict in the small group is successful when each member is committed to solving the problem (p. 177). Since each member is a potential or actual leader, the task should be easier to manage or the conflict more capable of being resolved.

Additional research on ethics teaching and leadership behavior in small groups is available upon request. The writer has taught a discussion course using John K. Brilhart Effective Group Discussion, 4th ed., Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Company Publishers 1982. Brilhart uses the writer's experiential method in teaching group discussion. The book also contains excellent bibliographic references to small group research. In the fall 1984 and spring 1985 the writer will teach two courses in Ethics for the Philosophy Department at West Chester University. Also see Rodney W. Napier and Matti K. Gershenfeld in their book, Making Groups Work: A Guide for Group Leaders (Boston: Houghton Mifflen 1983). The authors cite "leadership ethics" (pp. 36-38) as a significant norm in the leader's effect on persons.

DEWEY/MEISWINKEL DISCUSSION SCHEMA
(an operational experience in clarifying values through the reflective thought process)

The Process

Step One - The Felt Difficulty - Leader draws from each person--feelings, attitudes, oral observations about the general problem under discussion. After every member has shared his/her comments the leader assesses "groupthink" and helps the group arrive at some concensus in order to delimit the topic. Several ways to narrow the topic are:

1. Use consensus
2. Brainstorm solutions--select one
3. Allow majority to decide

Note: Write a discussion question as a proposition of policy. Think propositionally!

Step Two - Defining/Describing the specific problem named in Step One - Several ways to define are: descriptive, conventional, and operational.

1. Describe the problem--size, shape, weight, color, etc.
2. Define
   a. denotative
   b. common usage--familiar to the audience
   c. compare or contrast--the known with the unknown
   d. connotative--emotive or colorful words
   e. negation--what it is not
   f. logical--placing the idea within its class
   g. synonym/antonym
   h. use and function
   i. etymology or historical example

Step Three - Analysis - Determining the nature of the problem: its size, causes, the forces in operation that create or sustain it, etc. In essence, analysis includes locating the issues, defining the size and scope, and introducing evidence to back reasons asserted for or against the problem.

Note: A prerequisite to value formulation in the small group process begins with a rationalistic both side or pro/con analysis.

Step Four - Establish criteria for the selection of possible solutions--some "stock" criteria are how much will the solution cost, how much time do we need to implement the solution, upon whom does the burden of proof rest to do the solution. Other criteria are:

1. The solution must relieve the need--i.e., alleviate the symptoms

2. The solution must be practical or workable
3. The solution must bring benefits

Step Five - Brainstorm Solutions--a quantity of ideas without comment or criticism is needed. Wild ideas or dreams may be suggested.

As employed earlier--the process of brainstorming may be applied at any step. Once ideas (solutions) are listed, any combination is acceptable. The student should use the Raths Values Grid in conjunction with the Dewey-Meiswinkel schema.

Step Six - Implementation of the proposition or propositions of policy. This step incorporates specific strategies that each member or the group as a whole can do to carry out the solution or proposition.

These specific strategies for implementation, then, put values back in words since each person, as well as the group leader, plans, organizes, staffs, and directs the course of action to carry out the solution. Doing the strategy is the essence of any persuasive appeal.

Note: A strategy is any specific action taken by all members in order to realize the solution. For example, all strategies for problem solving fall into three general categories: democratic, such as letter writing petitions, political action groups, et cetera; or militant - boycotts, strikes, demonstrations, et cetera; or violent - any action that destroys property and/or harms the person physically.

VALUES GRID

PURPOSE

The Values Grid usually drives home the point that few of our beliefs or actions fit all seven of the valuing processes. This activity indicates what steps we must take in order to develop stronger and clearer values.

PROCEDURES

Name five or six issues or problems

	ISSUES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
ETC.								

The seven numbers heading the columns on the right-hand side of the paper represent the following seven questions:

1. Are you proud of (do you prize or cherish) your position?
2. Have you publicly affirmed your position?
3. Have you chosen your position from alternatives?
4. Have you chosen your position after thoughtful consideration of the pros and cons and consequences?
5. Have you chosen your position freely?
6. Have you acted on or done anything about your beliefs?
7. Have you acted with repetition, pattern or consistency on this issue?

The teacher can read these seven questions to the students, or write them on the board, or the student can write the key words (those that are underlined) at the top of each column. The students then answer each of these seven questions in relation to each issue. If you have a positive response to the question on top, put a check in the appropriate box. If you cannot answer the question affirmatively, leave the box blank.

Source: The grid was developed by Louis E. Raths, mentor of Sidney B. Simon--as reproduced in Meeting Yourself Halfway by Sidney B. Simon (Argus Communications, 1974), p. xiv.

The Theory E Leadership Development Model

The selection of an ethical leader for Quality/Productivity/Control (QPC) discussion is predicated on the selection of that leader who:

1. is an empathic listener, that is, he or she practices validation of the group members by:

    a. paraphrasing - "did I hear you say?"
    b. giving credit to ideas - "I'd like to pick up and add to what John just said or Jane said earlier."
    c. shows concern for divergent points of view by:

        1. making certain a balance of both views is presented.
        2. encourages "ideas clashes" and not "personality clashes."
        3. itemizes the responses or solutions by the use of the brainstorm technique - no judgment of solutions.

    Paraphrasing, validating (giving credit) and showing concern are the CORE listening behaviors.

2. is a person the group trusts with confidential information.

3. is a person of character; moral force.

4. is a person of honesty; integrity; truthfulness; fairness.

5. is a person with credibility or believability.

6. is a person with reasonably good communication skills.

Ethical leadership development presupposes that an opportunity be given to all group members to experience the leadership function. A second presupposition is based on the willingness of the group members to abide by the ground rules for effective TIME management of group discussion. That is, each member must talk, but speak briefly, even if just to paraphrase or give credit to another person's comments.

Other essential attributes of an effective ethical leader are:

1. he/she must be non manipulative, which means, the person selected by the group must be one whom the group perceives as non manipulative. The ascribed, selected, or even emergent leader must be one who:

    a. does not have a hidden agenda.
    b. incorporates his/her views only after all aspects have been aired by the group - essentially he/she speaks last.

2. is aware of the "blocking function" of some members as well as being sensitive to the "maintenance function" of others while asserting a steady concern that the group complete the "task function."

3. a good summarizer of group concensus.

4. a good motivator or stimulator via the probing types of questions he/she may ask.

So, in selecting the so called ethical leader we are simply saying that, at this moment, this particular person best meets the above criteria. This is not to say, as mentioned earlier, that others can't learn or even experience ethical leadership. Indeed, the ultimate goal of Theory E is that everyone in the Quality/Productivity/Control group (QPC) will get a chance to lead the group through the problem solving process -- the Dewey/Meiswinkel Schematic.

The key to the success of the D/M™ problem solving process is based on the premise that, whatever problem the group chooses to discuss, three essential criteria must be part of the ultimate solution chosen by the group:

> Do we have the TIME to solve the problem? TIME is an acronym for do we have the resources or dollars To do it, do we have the Individuals committed to do it, do we have the support of Management to implement it, do we have the central goal of Ethics as part of our ultimate decision.
>
> In a phrase, have we considered the cost, is the time-frame to achieve our goal reasonable, and have we selected the key person who will assume the burden of proof to help us implement our solution?

Additional criteria for the selection of the discussion problem should focus on (1) the urgency of the controversy or problem to be discussed, i.e., its priority among other controversial problems. (2) The current research available via the print medium or interview contacts that will enable documentation or prima facie case building. (3) Is the problem indigenous of our corporation or college or can we find models for comparison from other settings?

With the above overview in mind let us focus on a specific problem with XYZ college or corporation using the D/M discussion schema for ethical leadership development and problem solving that should enhance quality and productivity, as well as, encourage controlled ethical behavior on the part of all participants.